

VI. ALTERNATIVES

The State CEQA Guidelines' Section 15126 requires the description of a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which could feasibly attain the basic project objectives and an evaluation of the comparative merits of the alternatives. The range of alternatives to be analyzed is governed by the Rule of Reason, which requires only an analysis of those alternatives necessary to permit a reasonable choice. If the environmentally superior alternative is the "No Project", an environmentally superior alternative is to be identified among the other alternatives. A comparison of the alternatives is provided at the end of this section.

A. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROJECT LOCATION

As part of the latest update of the General Plan, adopted July 23, 2002, all property in the city was reviewed to identify additional sites for higher density residential and mixed uses. As shown on the following New Housing Sites map, 185 acres, including the project site, were designated for higher density residential or mixed use with the adoption of the General Plan. Alternative locations include the mixed use sites shown on the map. One of these locations is the northeast quadrant of El Camino Real and Lawrence Expressway. This 10.6-acre site is an existing shopping center with multiple retail uses on the northerly and easterly portions of the site and a restaurant along El Camino Real. At the maximum density of 45 du/acre, 477 units could be constructed on the site. Traffic impacts at this location would be very similar to the project site. There are not as many large trees on the site so the impact to vegetation would be slightly less and the adjacent residential uses to the north and east are separated by a public street, but other impacts would be very similar to the project site. While this site would appear to meet the project objectives, it is not currently on the market and available for redevelopment.

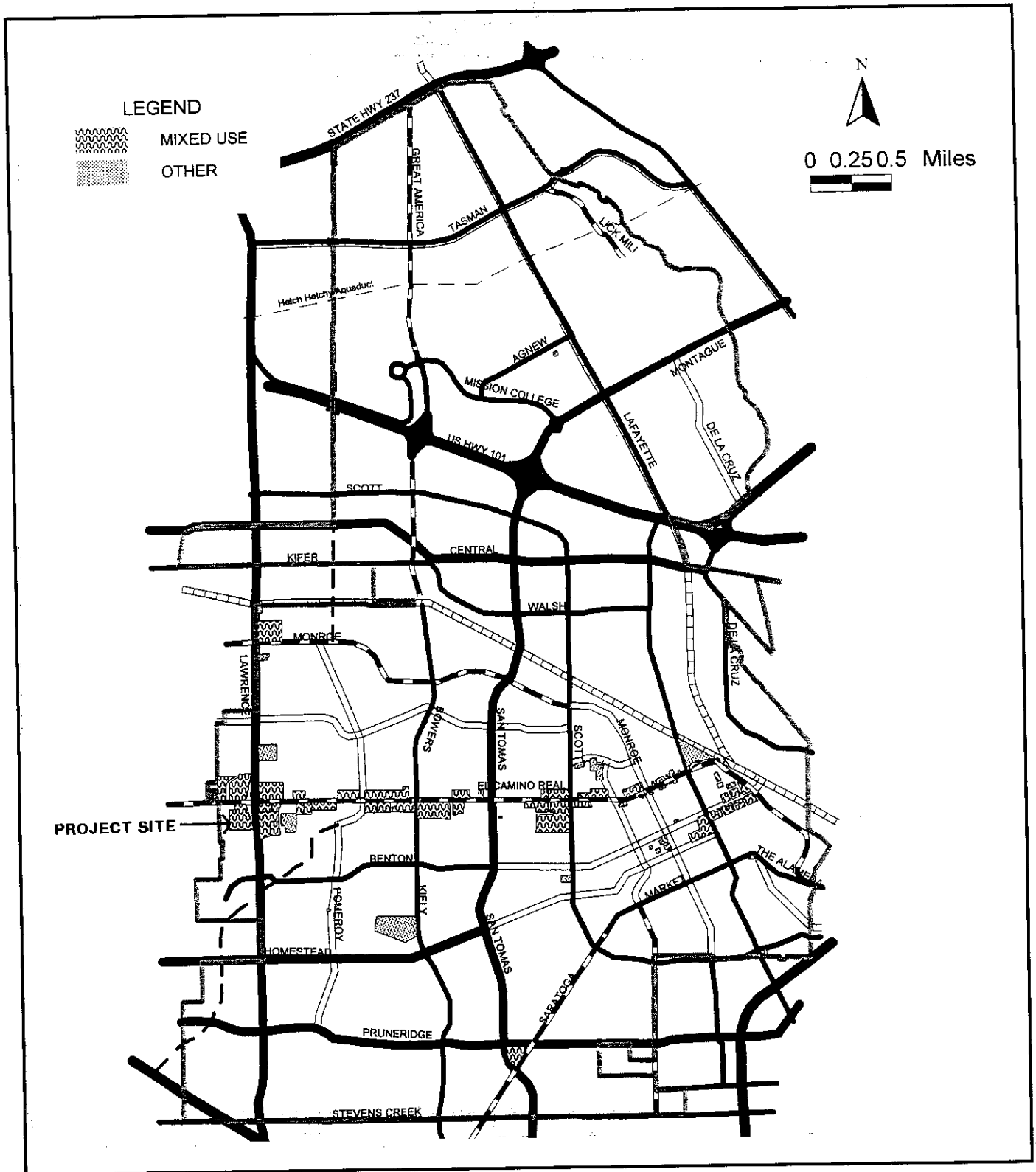
B. NO PROJECT

If the project does not proceed, the project impacts would be eliminated. The site probably would remain commercial for an unknown length of time; however, since it is in private ownership and located in a developed area, is designated for transit-oriented mixed use development on the City's General Plan, and is located in a County where there is a housing shortage, continuous efforts to develop the site in accordance with the General Plan land use designation can be expected.

C. ALTERNATIVE LAND USES

1. Increased Density Alternative

The 2001 General Plan Housing Study identified under-utilized sites designated for residential development including the project site. The General Plan designation for the site was



New Housing Sites
Figure 25

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subsequently changed to Transit-Oriented Mixed Use (26 to 45 du/acre). At the maximum density of 45 du/acre, a total of 567 units could be constructed on the site, or 77 units more than the 490 proposed by the project. The 77 additional units would help reduce the jobs/housing imbalance and meet the City's regional housing need. The additional units would increase building heights and parking requirements on the site. Because additional parking would have to be underground or in a structure, it would increase the unit costs. The additional units would add approximately 511 daily and 36 a.m. and 48 p.m. peak hour trips, and would have a commensurate impact on public facilities and services. The increased number of units would not meet the project objective of a high quality transit-oriented mixed use development containing 490 residential units, 12,300 square feet of office space and up to 171,000 square feet of commercial/retail space.

While an increased density alternative would increase traffic and impacts on public facilities and services, a reduced density, or all residential, alternative with significantly fewer units would, conversely, reduce traffic generated from the site as well as impacts on facilities and services. Depending upon the number of units, the impact to the sanitary sewer line might not require mitigation. A reduced density or all residential alternative would not meet the project objective of a high quality transit-oriented mixed use development containing 490 residential units, 12,300 square feet of office space and up to 171,000 square feet of commercial/retail space.

2. All Commercial Alternative

The project site could be redeveloped with a larger new commercial use replacing or adding onto the existing 135,000-square-foot structure to create a "big box" facility of up to 150,000 square feet. A larger commercial/retail use on the site would increase sales tax revenues to the City, but would not help meet the City's identified housing need. The increased square footage would add to traffic in the area, with approximately 975 daily and 20 a.m. and 98 p.m. peak hour trips in addition to the existing use. An all commercial alternative would not meet the project objectives of providing a mixed use with a street-level retail village.

D. ALTERNATIVES COMPARISON

A comparison of the alternative land uses and locations is generally summarized in the following Alternatives Matrix. The "No Project" alternative is the environmentally superior alternative; therefore, an environmentally superior alternative must be selected from the other alternatives. In general, the alternative location in the northeasterly quadrant of El Camino Real and Lawrence Expressway appears to be the next "environmentally superior" alternative because of the slightly lesser concerns for tree removal and the public street interface with the adjacent residential to the north and east.

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Category	PROJECT SITE				ALTERNATIVE LOCATION
	Project	No Project	Incr. Density	All Comm'l	NEly Quadrant of El Camino/Lawrence
Aesthetics	●	○	●	●	●
Agriculture Resources	○	○	○	○	○
Air Quality	●	○	●	●	●
Biological Resources	○	○	○	○	○
Cultural Resources	●	○	●	●	●
Energy	○	○	○	○	○
Geology and Soils	●	○	●	●	●
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	●	○	●	●	●
Hydrology and Water Quality	●	○	●	●	●
Land Use and Planning	●	○	●	●	●
Noise	●	○	●	●	●
Public Services	○	○	○	○	○
Transportation / Traffic	○	○	●	○	○
Utilities and Service Systems	○	○	○	○	○

○ No concern

● Some concern

● Major concern

Alternatives Matrix

Figure 26